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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Knowledge on Women's Rights among Working and Non –Working Women of Udupi District.

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### Abstract

**Background:** Independence of India heralded the introduction of laws relating to women. The Constitution provided equality to men and women. In spite of India's reputation for respecting women, including treating her as a Goddess, history tells us that women were also ill-treated. According to a global study conducted by Thomson Reuters, India is the "fourth most dangerous country" in the world for women. Vast number of people is not aware of their rights as human beings. The existing laws help them to defend them and counter abuses. Knowledge of human rights is essential for the promotion of human rights and for the creation of a climate of public opinion in which gross violation of human rights is unacceptable. **Objective:** To assess the knowledge regarding women's rights between working and non-working women. **Materials and Methods:** Research approach was quantitative-survey approach and design used was comparative descriptive design. The data were collected from 50 working and non –working women between the age group of 18-60 years by house to house survey in Marne village of Udupi District by administering questionnaire to working and non-working women

**Results:** The study found that majority of working women had good knowledge (84%) whereas majority of the non-working women (76%) had average knowledge. The

**Conclusion:** The study concluded that working women have good knowledge than non-working women.

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### Back ground

In spite of India's reputation for respecting women, including treating her as a Goddess, history tells us that women were also ill-treated. The high number of female foeticide, infanticide and human trafficking prevalent in India has placed it as the fourth most dangerous place for women in the world. "In India, up to 50 million girls were thought to be 'missing' over the past century due to female infanticide and foeticide," as per the UN Population Fund.<sup>4</sup> Bangalore is one of the four districts with the highest number of dowry deaths and it is reported as "Dowry kills 4 in Bangalore daily".

According to the State Crime Records Bureau, June 2010 Government of Karnataka. Number of cases reported under the head 'Crime against Women' has increased from 812 in 2009 to 931 cases in June 2010. The rape cases have increased from 47 to 57 and the dowry deaths increased from 18 to 23 during the corresponding month of last year.

The researcher came across with many women who were victim of violence at home or work during the field visit to community. Though there are various acts to protect the women, literature shows that there is still high prevalence of violence against women in India. All these shows the awareness given to the women about their rights is very less and there is a need for rethinking to protect our public from violence. Hence the researcher found the need to assess the knowledge and perception toward women's rights and to create awareness among women about their rights and to protect them.

### **Study hypothesis:**

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- **H<sub>1</sub>:** There will be significant difference between knowledge scores among working and non-working women
- **H<sub>2</sub>:** There will be significant association between knowledge and selected variables like education, type of occupation, and family income per month.

### **Materials and Methods:**

Quantitative study adopted a survey approach to assess the knowledge of working and non-working women on women's rights. The design used was comparative descriptive design. The study population is working women with a minimum qualification of SSLC and non-working women between the age group of 18-30 years, could read and write in Kannada and English, who resides in the adopted village of Manipal College Of Nursing, Manipal.

The power of the study was fixed at 80% and confidence interval as 95%. The estimated sample size was 47 in each group. The sample taken in each group is 50. Administrative permissions were obtained from Dean, Manipal College of Nursing Manipal and Director of Nursing Education, Manipal University, Manipal, ethical clearance from Institutional Ethics Committee of Kasturba Hospital, Manipal, written informed consent from the participants of the study

### **Data collection instruments and measurements**

#### **Tool 1: Demographic Proforma**

The demographic proforma included items to collect data on the background. There were 13 items. The items included were age, religion education, occupation, income, type of family, awareness about the women's rights, source of information, marital status, number of children, do you like to know the sex of the child before delivery, given/ got dowry, subjection to any form of domestic violence. The tool was validated by seven experts, translated into Kannada and retranslated to English and pretested among three working and non-working women respectively.

#### **Tool 2: Knowledge questionnaire on women's rights**

The objective of the study was to assess the knowledge of working and non-working women about women's rights. Therefore a multiple choice questionnaire on women's rights was developed. Blue print consists of areas like Dowry Prohibition Act, Pre-natal diagnostic and sex determination Act, Domestic Violence Act. The tool had 30 questions with one response and three distracters for each question. Each question was carrying a score of one for correct answer and a score of zero for the wrong answer. The knowledge score was arbitrarily classified as: Good knowledge, Average knowledge and Poor knowledge.

Pretesting was done among three working and non-working women respectively. Reliability was tested by split-half method among 10 working and non-working women and  $r = 0.87$ . Pilot study was conducted among 10 working and non-working women and no changes were made in the tool or in the design of the study.

**Procedure of data collection:**

The data was collected from 50 working and non -working women of Marne village of Udupi District. During this period investigator approached the working and non -working women and explained the purpose of study, ensured the confidentiality of the information given by the subjects and written consent was taken. The data were collected from house to house survey in Marne village by administering questionnaire to working and non-working women

**Results :****Description of sample characteristics****Table 1: Frequency and percentage distribution of samples characteristics**

| Sample characteristics                            | n= (50+50) = 100 |    |                   |     |
|---------------------------------------------------|------------------|----|-------------------|-----|
|                                                   | Working women    |    | Non-working women |     |
|                                                   | f                | %  | f                 | %   |
| <b>Age in years</b>                               |                  |    |                   |     |
| 18-30                                             | 24               | 48 | 18                | 36  |
| 31-45                                             | 18               | 36 | 21                | 42  |
| 46-60                                             | 8                | 16 | 11                | 22  |
| <b>Religion</b>                                   |                  |    |                   |     |
| Hindu                                             | 47               | 94 | 40                | 80  |
| Christian                                         | 3                | 6  | 10                | 20  |
| <b>Education</b>                                  |                  |    |                   |     |
| Primary (1-7)                                     | 0                | 0  | 18                | 36  |
| High school (8-10)                                | 6                | 12 | 26                | 52  |
| PUC                                               | 2                | 4  | 5                 | 10  |
| Diploma                                           | 17               | 34 | 0                 | 0   |
| Graduate                                          | 19               | 38 | 1                 | 2   |
| Postgraduate                                      | 6                | 12 | 0                 | 0   |
| <b>Type of occupation</b>                         |                  |    |                   |     |
| Non-working                                       | 0                | 0  | 50                | 100 |
| Class IV worker                                   | 6                | 12 |                   |     |
| Technician                                        | 6                | 12 |                   |     |
| Clerk                                             | 6                | 12 |                   |     |
| Teacher                                           | 23               | 46 |                   |     |
| Nurse                                             | 9                | 18 |                   |     |
| <b>Type of family</b>                             |                  |    |                   |     |
| Nuclear                                           | 23               | 46 | 28                | 56  |
| Joint                                             | 27               | 54 | 22                | 44  |
| <b>Family income per month in rupees</b>          |                  |    |                   |     |
| <3,000                                            | 0                | 0  | 34                | 68  |
| 3001-8000                                         | 0                | 0  | 13                | 26  |
| 8001-13,000                                       | 18               | 36 | 1                 | 2   |
| >13,000                                           | 32               | 64 | 2                 | 4   |
| <b>Are you aware about the women's rights?</b>    |                  |    |                   |     |
| Yes                                               | 46               | 92 | 43                | 86  |
| No                                                | 4                | 8  | 7                 | 14  |
| <b>If yes, what is the source of information?</b> |                  |    |                   |     |
| Family                                            | 11               | 22 | 17                | 34  |
| Relatives                                         | 2                | 4  | 2                 | 4   |
| Friends                                           | 2                | 4  | 2                 | 4   |
| Media                                             | 32               | 64 | 22                | 44  |
| <b>Marital status</b>                             |                  |    |                   |     |
| Married                                           | 34               | 68 | 43                | 86  |
| Unmarried                                         | 16               | 32 | 7                 | 14  |
| <b>Number of children</b>                         |                  |    |                   |     |

|                                                                                    |    |     |    |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|-----|----|-----|
| 0                                                                                  | 19 | 38  | 14 | 28  |
| 1                                                                                  | 7  | 14  | 9  | 18  |
| 2                                                                                  | 23 | 46  | 20 | 40  |
| 3                                                                                  | 1  | 2   | 7  | 14  |
| <b>Do you like to know the sex of the child before delivery?</b>                   |    |     |    |     |
| Yes                                                                                | 0  | 0   | 1  | 2.0 |
| No                                                                                 | 50 | 100 | 49 | 98  |
| <b>Have you given/ got dowry?</b>                                                  |    |     |    |     |
| Yes                                                                                | 0  | 0   | 0  | 0   |
| No                                                                                 | 50 | 100 | 50 | 100 |
| <b>Do you think you have ever been subjected to any form of domestic violence?</b> |    |     |    |     |
| Yes                                                                                | 0  | 0   |    |     |
| No                                                                                 | 50 | 100 | 50 | 100 |

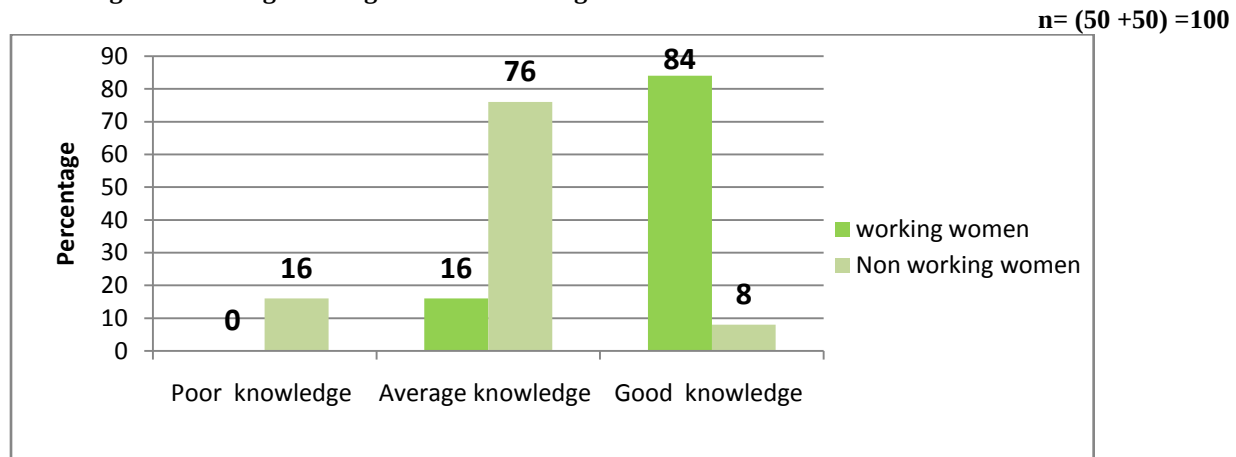
Majority of the working women were teachers (46%) and between the age group of 18-30 years (48%), whereas among the non-working women majority were in the age group of 31-45 years (42%). Majority of working women (92%) were aware about the women's rights and the source of information was media (64%). Majority of the non-working women (86%) are aware about the women's rights and the source of information was media (44%). Majority of working women were Graduates (38%) whereas majority of the non-working women has an education of high school (52%). All the working and non- working women (100%) reported that they have not been subjected to domestic violence and given/got dowry. All the working women (100%) reported that they don't want to know the sex of the child before delivery. 2% of non -working women reported that they want to know the sex of the child before delivery. (Table 1)

### Knowledge of working and non-working women on women's rights

**Table 2: Area wise mean, standard deviation and mean percentage of knowledge on women's rights among working women and non-working women.**

| Area                                           | Range of scores | n= (50+50) =100 |                 |                    |                   |                 |                    |
|------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
|                                                |                 | Working women   |                 |                    | Non-working women |                 |                    |
|                                                |                 | Mean            | Mean percentage | Standard deviation | Mean              | Mean percentage | Standard deviation |
| Dowry Prohibition Act                          | 0-6             | 2.64            | 44              | 1.16               | 2.38              | 38              | 1.10               |
| Pre-natal diagnostic and sex determination Act | 0-11            | 5.96            | 54              | 1.98               | 3.20              | 29              | 1.28               |
| Domestic Violence Act                          | 0-13            | 8.5             | 65              | 2.1                | 7.50              | 57.7            | 2.40               |
| Overall score                                  | 0-30            | 23.76           | 79.80           | 4.72               | 14.94             | 49.8            | 4.5                |

Mean percentage score obtained in different areas of knowledge on women's rights among working and non-working women ranged from 65 to 44 and 29 to 57.7 respectively. Least mean percentage of knowledge score was found in the area of domestic violence act (44%) in working women. Least mean percentage of knowledge score was found in the area of Pre-natal diagnostic and sex determination Act in non- working women (29%). The overall mean knowledge for working women and non working women is 23.76 and 14.94 respectively. (Table 2)

**Knowledge level among working and non -working women**

**Fig 1: Bar diagram showing the frequency and percentage distribution of knowledge scores of working and non -working women**

Majority of working women had good knowledge (84%) and average knowledge (16%) respectively whereas majority of the non-working women (76%) had average knowledge, 16% had poor knowledge and 8% had good knowledge. The working women have good knowledge than non-working women (Fig 1)

**Association between level of knowledge and selected variables among working women**

**Table 3: Association between level of knowledge and selected variables such as age, education, type of occupation income among working women**

|                                   |                 |      |                  |    | (n=50)  |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|------|------------------|----|---------|
| Sample characteristics            | Knowledge level |      | Chi-square value | df | P value |
|                                   | Average         | Good |                  |    |         |
| <b>Age in years</b>               |                 |      |                  |    |         |
| 18-30                             | 3               | 21   | .707             | 2  | .702    |
| 31-45                             | 3               | 15   |                  |    |         |
| 46-60                             | 2               | 6    |                  |    |         |
| <b>Education</b>                  |                 |      |                  |    |         |
| Primary (1-7)                     | 0               | 6    | 2.90             | 4  | .575    |
| High school                       | 0               | 2    |                  |    |         |
| PUC                               | 3               | 14   |                  |    |         |
| Diploma                           | 3               | 16   |                  |    |         |
| Graduate                          | 2               | 4    |                  |    |         |
| Postgraduate                      | 0               | 6    |                  |    |         |
| <b>Type of occupation</b>         |                 |      |                  |    |         |
| Non-working                       |                 |      | 3.11             | 4  | .539    |
| Class IV worker                   | 0               | 6    |                  |    |         |
| Technician                        | 0               | 6    |                  |    |         |
| Clerk                             | 1               | 5    |                  |    |         |
| Teacher                           | 5               | 18   |                  |    |         |
| Nurse                             | 2               | 7    |                  |    |         |
| <b>Income per month in rupees</b> |                 |      |                  |    |         |
| 8001-13,000                       | 3               | 15   | 0.009            | 1  | .923    |
| >13,000                           | 5               | 27   |                  |    |         |

Chi-square was computed to find the association between knowledge and selected variables. It showed that there is no association between knowledge and selected variables like education, type of occupation, income per month. So the null hypothesis was accepted with regard to these variables and research hypothesis was rejected. It is inferred that there is no association between the level of knowledge and selected variables like education, type of occupation, income per month among working women. (Table 3)

#### Association between level of knowledge and selected variables among non- working women

**Table 4: Association between level of knowledge and selected variables such as age, religion, education, occupation and type, income, type of family among non -working women**

|                                   |                 |         |      |                  |    | (n=50)  |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|---------|------|------------------|----|---------|
| Sample characteristics            | Knowledge level |         |      | Chi-square value | df | P value |
|                                   | Poor            | Average | Good |                  |    |         |
| <b>Age in years</b>               |                 |         |      |                  |    |         |
| 18-30                             | 3               | 15      | 0    | 3.351            | 4  | .501    |
| 31-45                             | 3               | 16      | 2    |                  |    |         |
| 46-60                             | 2               | 7       | 2    |                  |    |         |
| <b>Education</b>                  |                 |         |      |                  |    |         |
| Primary (1-7)                     | 1               | 16      | 1    | 5.839            | 6  | .441    |
| High school                       | 5               | 19      | 2    |                  |    |         |
| PUC                               | 2               | 2       | 1    |                  |    |         |
| Graduate                          | 0               | 1       | 0    |                  |    |         |
| Postgraduate                      |                 |         |      |                  |    |         |
| <b>Income per month in rupees</b> |                 |         |      |                  |    |         |
| <3000                             | 4               | 27      | 3    | 10.201           | 6  | .116    |
| 3001-8000                         | 4               | 9       | 0    |                  |    |         |
| 8001-13,000                       | 0               | 0       | 1    |                  |    |         |
| >13,000                           | 0               | 2       | 0    |                  |    |         |

Chi-square was computed to find the association between knowledge and selected variables. It showed that there is no association between knowledge and selected variables like age, education, income per month. So the null hypothesis was accepted with regard to these variables and research hypothesis was rejected. It is inferred that there is no association between the level of knowledge and selected variables like education, type of occupation, income per month among non -working women. (Table 4)

## Discussion

### Knowledge on Women's rights

The findings of the present study revealed that majority of working women had good knowledge (84%) whereas majority of the non-working women (76%) had average knowledge.

A few studies contradicting the current findings. A study conducted by Seshan V, Sivaram V on assessment of knowledge attitude and practice of Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques Act among antenatal mothers in Coimbatore; revealed that 68% of the women had inadequate knowledge, 28% had moderate and only 4% had adequate knowledge. Similarly a study conducted on legal empowerment of rural women in selected legislative provisions revealed that all had poor knowledge with respect to different aspect of selected legislative provisions.

Association between knowledge and selected variables

The findings of the study showed that there is no association between knowledge on women's rights and selected variables like education, type of occupation, income per month among working and non- working women. There are no studies to support these findings.

## Conclusions

Violence against women is one of the most crucial mechanism by which they are forced into subordinate position. Women are subjected to violence that results in deprivation of their fundamental rights. Though there are various acts to protect the women, literature shows that there is still high prevalence of violence against women in India. All these show the awareness given to the women about their rights is very less and there is a need for rethinking to protect our public from violence.

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